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Gov. Ricketts Recognizes 15 Nebraska High School Students for Top ACT and SAT Scores



Lincoln – Today, Governor Pete Ricketts recognized 15 Nebraska high school students for their academic achievement in earning top scores of 36 on the ACT or a 2400 on the SAT college admissions exam.

Ceremonies were held at Westside High School in Omaha and Lincoln East High School.

“Earning top scores on the ACT and SAT exams are great achievements for our Nebraska students,” Governor Ricketts said. “These students from Hastings, Lincoln, Omaha, and Plainview represent our state’s talented and ambitious youth who are leaders both in and outside of the classroom.”

The Governor was joined by Matt Blomstedt, Nebraska’s Commissioner of Education, as well as representatives of ACT and the College Board to honor Nebraska’s seniors earning the highest possible composite scores on the exams.

Top scoring ACT students are Jack Bruck of Creighton Preparatory School; Shaket Chaudhary and Jennifer Solheim of Westside High School; Jonathan Collins of Mount Michael Benedictine High School; Emma Cooney of Lincoln East High School; Ryder Mays of Hastings Senior High School; Daniel Parr and Shuowei Quin of Lincoln East High School; Anna Russert of Lincoln Northeast High School; Anne Stratman of

Duchesne Academy; Jainaha Srikumar of Brownell-Talbot School; and Zachary Warneke of Millard South High School.

Timothy "Cooper" Knaak of Plainsview received a top score on the SAT.

Erin Cooney of Lincoln East High School and Celine Qui of Millard North High School received top scores on both exams.

"Perfect ACT/SAT scores are a substantial accomplishment for students and a great honor to the work of parents, teachers, and of course, the students," said Nebraska Education Commissioner Matthew Blomstedt. "High achievement and excellence are reflected in these scores and it serves as a reminder of the efforts to continuously raise the bar and improve outcomes for all of Nebraska's students. Congratulations to the students who reached this high mark this year."

The ACT consists of four tests scored on a scale of one to 36. In Nebraska, 17,768 students out of 1,845,787 students nationwide completed the ACT in 2014. Nebraska ACT testers have increased by ten percent since 2010.

"The scores achieved by these outstanding Nebraska seniors are significant and rare," said ACT President Jon Erickson. "Your exceptional scores will provide any colleges to which you choose to apply ample evidence of your readiness for the academic rigors that lie ahead. We at ACT offer our sincere congratulations to you and to all who made this achievement possible."

Used by colleges and universities throughout the world as a fair and reliable measure of academic readiness, the SAT measures the skills and knowledge that evidence shows are essential for college and career success. In the Class of 2014, 1,672,395 students took the SAT worldwide, including 772 Nebraska students.

"On behalf of the College Board, I'm thrilled to congratulate Erin, Celine, Cooper, and all the students being recognized today," said Stacy Caldwell, the College Board's Vice President of College Readiness Assessments. "We honor them for the hard work and dedicated academic practice that enabled them to perform so well. The College Board also celebrates the parents, teachers and counselors of these exceptional students for providing them with the tools for success."

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